Operations Concerns — upcoming months
For 8/28/03 board meeting, per Danica's agenda from dated 8/26

Note: we may not have time to cover all of these and the rest of the agenda in this afternoon's brief board meeting, but you should be aware of them.

Mike

1. Money to pay minimal office expenses if we don't continue receiving or taking subscription money:
   See financial report.

   Also: what to do about Alex Steffen's $7,000 in light of no new money from newsstand sales.

2. Tax filing for 2002.
   My understanding is that David asked Sandra Reinhardt to file for an extension in May. I don't know the current status. Danica is overseeing this.

3. D & O insurance:
   $1350 due by September 17. We have money to pay.

3. Bioneers:
   Do we want to keep booth (cancellation deadline is 9/19)?
   What do we want to say/announce/sell at booth?
   Who is going to work the booth? We have no staff. I can do some on Friday and Sunday, but most of Saturday is taken up with Center for Ecoliteracy stuff. Emily may or may not be in town then, and may or may not be willing to do booth. I can ask her when she comes back on Sept. 15.
   If we're trying to get 111 out, Bioneers would be a great place to have it available, and to help reassure people that we're continuing to publish..

   Note: I estimate that 111 would need to go to printer by September 15 for safety, and maybe a *few* days after that if we feel very lucky, in order to have copies at Bioneers. It still needs more work: Stephanie Johnston needs to come in to make corrections (probably one day); more important, we have to know what we want to say to readers on page that was Publisher's Statement and/or on new blow-in.

4. Post Office:
   At some point, we have to deal with post office re our inability to get four issues out in 2003 (may be none, may be one, *may* be two; I can't imagine three).
   Two issues: (a) status of our permit; (b) they consider taking people's money and not giving them what you promised to be mail fraud.
   David managed to work this out with them after we missed just one issue in 2001, but it took some effort. It's little more tricky this time, without our being able to

predict upcoming issues. Even trickier if board intends to inform readers that it is suspending the magazine in favor of catalog, going only online, or whatever.

Other post office issue: we need to print annual circulation report (normally done in December issue). I don't know what happens if you think planning to do an issue, but then don't. Nor do I know what happens if you tell readers you're suspending publication.

5. Money for printing 111:

How long do we keep appealing for money and taking money that's sent to us? See email note I received today: "... But now I've got a second question, which is, if I make a donation (like $100) will that really help get spring 2003 out and a chance that fall and winter can't be long behind?" What is our answer?"

Also: what do we consider the status of the $10,000 we have received so far in response to appeals to help us print 111?

6. How long do we keep taking people's money for new or renewed subscriptions?

Additional note: if we suddenly decided we want to do a mailing to subscribers, it would take Fulco a little time to process the orders that have come in since March, if they'd do it without an issue in sight.

7. Refunds:

So far we have received two requests for subscription refunds due to no issues since winter (one through a subscription agency for a library, one from an individual). I'd anticipate more. Shall we pay them? What if there are more? I can always try to talk at least the individuals out of it (the particular person here is a lost cause, but others might not be); agencies may be more difficult. Finally, though, if they won't be persuaded to hang on a little longer, we need a policy.

8. Sample issues:

We're sitting on more than 450 requests for free issues (per offer on website). I haven't done anything with them, since there's no new issue to send out anyway.

Here's how this works: Fulco treats these requests exactly as it does subscriptions from people who check "bill me." The person is entered in the records as a subscriber, gets the next issue that is sent out, and is then billed for a one-year sub. If they cancel, they cancel. If they don't respond, three more notices are sent out. If they don't respond after that (normally this would be before the following issue is mailed), they're cancelled.

What I know about results: Fulco says that 20-25% of people asking for a sample issue then pay for a subscription. Approximate costs to us: Sending issue, about $1. Keeping on Fulco's subscriber list and sending four notices: $4.16. Total = about $5.16. If 25% subscribe, cost of the three who don't = up to $15.48 (depending on number of notices sent). Cost of the one who does depends on how many notices it takes before they send the money.

So: I think we're about breaking even (which is cheaper than most other ways of getting new subscribers, and is a plus if/when they renew), but there is a cost. We could keep going with this, send the requests to Fulco whenever 111 is imminent, and take the money of those who subscribe. Or we could send emails to the 450 explaining our situation and telling them we've suspended the free issue offer — and, meantime, ask Joshua to pull references to that offer from the website. Or you might think of a better plan.